



## IMMEDIATE ADJUSTMENTS NEEDED IN GEORGIA'S AGRICULTURE

(Summary of comments made by J. W. Fanning, Extension Economist, University of Georgia, at Farm Credit Conference sponsored by Agricultural Committee of Ga. Bankers Association in Macon on Feb. 11-12, 1953)

Georgia's agriculture will continue to grow in the years ahead as the farmers, bankers, and others who are concerned with its growth recognize those fields which offer the greatest opportunities for expansion. The following discussion is an attempt to point out some of the development opportunities for Georgia agriculture together with needs for expediting this progress. The figures were secured from a Production Capacity Study conducted in Georgia. This study was contributed to by many agricultural workers and others having an intimate knowledge of Georgia agriculture.

1 - Georgia's cash crop acreage expansion is limited, but opportunities for increasing production through higher yields stand as a challenge to farmers and bankers.

There are approximately 2,500,000 acres devoted to cash crop production in Georgia. This acreage provides more than one-half of all cash farm income received by Georgia farmers. At present tobacco and peanuts are under strict acreage controls. Indications are that cotton could come back under controls in 1954. Vegetable acreage expansion is apparently limited to a relatively small increase. Fruit acreage has been decreasing for some years but seems to be stabilizing now.

Increasing yields are real possibilities and could bring about greater efficiency in production. The following yields are attainable with good production practices including adequate fertilization - cotton 350 pounds of lint, peanuts 1,100 pounds, tobacco 1,200 pounds.

A point to be emphasized is that Georgia must have an expanding and a growing agriculture. This apparently will not take place in the realm of cash crops, as the overall acreage of these crops is becoming fixed and expansion is impossible in the near future. We must look elsewhere to the dynamics of Georgia agriculture.

2 - The 9,000,000 to 9,500,000 acres of land in grains, grasses, and legumes offer the real opportunity for expanding Georgia's agriculture in the years ahead. How we use this land and utilize its production pretty well sets the pattern of prosperity in the future. Let's take a look at some opportunities.

Corn - Acreage could well stabilize around 3,000,000 acres by 1955 with an increase in yields per acre to 25 bushels.

Oats - An increase in acreage from 815,000 in 1950 to 1,000,000 in 1955 is not only possible but desirable. Yields of 30 bushels per acre are not unreasonable.



Wheat - Georgia farmers could grow 250,000 acres of wheat against the 166,000 in 1950. Yields of 18 bushels per acre do not appear out of line.

Hay - An increase of 100,000 acres in hay is desirable and possible with higher yields per acre.

Grazing Crops - An increase of 500,000 acres in permanent pasture to a total acreage of 3,500,000 by 1955 is possible.

Temporary grazing in the amount of 2,000,000 acres is needed - an increase of 800,000 over the present estimated acreage.

With good production practices, the carrying capacity of these grazing lands can be doubled from the present basis.

3 - The increased fertilization of Georgia's crop and pasture crops offer an opportunity for larger and more efficient production. An indication of these needs is given below.

Total plant food needs represent an increase from 237,666 tons in 1950 to 365,582 tons in 1955, or a percentage increase of 50 percent.

Nitrogen needs represent an increase from 63,104 to 100,028 tons; phosphoric acid from 107,101 tons to 140,073; and potash from 67,461 tons to 125,481.

Georgia lands need an application of 7,910,000 tons of limestone with 1,582,000 tons needed annually for maintenance.

The great opportunity facing Georgia farmers, bankers, and others concerned is the wise and full use of the grain, grass, and legume lands. Herein lies Georgia's expanding agriculture in the years ahead. And a larger investment of capital is a means toward this end.

4 - Georgia's livestock population must expand to effectively utilize the increased production of these grains, grasses and legumes.

Not only must numbers increase but management of livestock and poultry must be made more efficient through better feeding and breeding. Scrub animals on high cost pasture cannot live together in a sound and profitable livestock system.

Georgia's cattle population can be increased by 25% by 1955 with more and better feeds.

Georgia can increase its hog numbers by 20 percent and its laying hens by the same percentage by 1955.

Milk cow numbers can expand by 6 percent with larger yields per cow.

Georgia has reached top place in the Nation in broiler production. The problem of a greater production of feeds to maintain this industry grossing \$88,000,000 in 1952 is a wonderful opportunity for Georgia's agriculture.



Converting grains, grasses and legumes into livestock and poultry dollars is the challenge ahead and the opportunity for expanding Georgia's agriculture.

5 - A larger total capital investment is needed on Georgia farms to take full advantage of these opportunities. Georgia now has only 900,000 people on its farms against 1,600,000 in 1920 and 1,360,000 in 1940. Georgia farmers have exchanged a lot of machines for hand labor, and an increasing investment in this field is needed together with a growing efficiency in the use of such machines and equipment.

This new type of agriculture is bringing problems in management, the like of which has never before been faced by Georgia farmers and bankers and others concerned with agricultural development. But it's a more profitable agriculture than the only cash crop - fiber economy. The great challenge now is to learn how to handle it efficiently and to push forward to the full and wise use of all resources. Georgia farmers are on their way toward a more productive agriculture than ever seen in this State.



